

must take a stand against the horrendous policies which China continue to live by.

HONORING PASTOR EDDIE
McDONALD, SR.

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I come before you today with a heavy heart, as I stand here to recognize the achievements of a great man who gave much to his family, his community, and to the Lord. On March 8, Pastor Eddie McDonald, Sr. of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church in Pontiac, Michigan, joined the Lord after a lifetime of service.

For many years, Pastor Eddie McDonald was known as one of the most respected and influential leaders in the City of Pontiac. It is nearly impossible to imagine what the Pontiac area would be like had Pastor McDonald chosen not to move here from his home in Fayetteville, North Carolina in 1953. In 1958 he joined the congregation of Messiah Missionary Baptist Church. He was ordained as a deacon in January 1959 and became a minister on March 18, 1962.

In 1966, Pastor McDonald began a street ministry, and the following year organized Bibleway Missionary Baptist Church, serving as Pastor through its first year. On March 28, 1968, Pastor McDonald became the pastor of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, and held the position up until his untimely death.

Pastor McDonald's influence extended not only in the Church, but the community as well. He was affiliated with a number of professional and charitable organizations including the Pontiac Ecumenical Ministry, Pontiac Citizen's Coalition, Lighthouse and the Pontiac Youth Assistance Program. Pastor McDonald also served as president of the Oakland County Ministerial Fellowship. Not limiting his good deeds to the State of Michigan, he and his family have been instrumental in food and clothing drives benefitting needy individuals throughout the country.

Mr. Speaker, when Pontiac became a part of my district, I was told by many that the first person I should meet was Pastor Eddie McDonald. This advice proved to be beneficial because from it, I gained a resource, an ally, a confidant, and most importantly, a friend. My sincerest condolences go out to his wonderful wife, Mary, their extended family, and the congregation of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church. He will be sorely missed.

TRIBUTE TO MAYOR THOMAS A.
EGAN

HON. BILL LUTHER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. LUTHER. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House today to honor a devoted public servant, Thomas A. Egan of Eagan, MN. After 20 distinguished years as council member and mayor of Eagan, Tom recently decided to retire from public service. Although his leadership will be greatly missed, Tom's legacy is the shared sense of community and responsibility that Eagan residents will carry into the new millennium.

Tom also served a successful tenure as president of the National Organization to In-sure a Sound-Controlled Environment (NOISE) where he was a tireless advocate of airport noise mitigation. Tom's dedication to airport noise reduction helped communities and citizens nationwide address the adverse effects of increased noise pollution.

On behalf of these communities and citizens, especially his constituents in Eagan, MN, we greatly appreciate all of Tom's contributions and efforts and we wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING THE MEMBERS
OF THE UNIVERSITY HIGH
SCHOOL MARIACHI CULTURAL

HON. CHET EDWARDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my best wishes to the members of the University High School's Mariachi Cultural. This group represents Texas' multicultural heritage and helps instill pride in our Hispanic culture.

The group was started in March 1997, under the capable leadership of Jose Nino. Since then, the volunteer student group has performed at numerous events and was featured on Univision, the international cable station.

Earlier this year, the group was able to purchase new uniforms after a successful fundraising effort. The Waco community came out full force for this talented musical group and made the new uniforms a reality.

I ask members to join me in congratulating this special group on their musical successes.

THE PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYER-
EMPLOYEE COOPERATION ACT
OF 1999

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act of 1999, a bill I proudly re-introduce with the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. KILDEE.

This legislation, which was originally introduced in the 105th Congress and had 203 co-sponsors, establishes modest, minimum federal standards relating to collective bargaining for those groups who provide safety and security to the public, namely our fire fighters and police officers.

Unfortunately, many of those whose job it is to protect the public from danger are left to fend for themselves. They do not have the right to negotiate such basic issues as hours, wages and conditions of employment because some states still do not provide collective bargaining rights for their public employees. This is especially troublesome since fire fighters and police officers take their oaths to serve and protect the public very seriously, putting themselves at risk for the public's well-being.

Our bill recognizes the public safety officers' unique situation by creating a special collective bargaining right outside the scope of other federal labor law. More importantly, it does so

without dictating to the states what their specific laws should be since the legislation is general enough to preserve a state's right to implement a collective bargaining statute on their own terms. Furthermore, states that already have collective bargaining laws in place would be exempt from the federal statute.

I would like to make it clear that this legislation does not permit strikes by public safety officers nor does it provide for mandatory binding arbitration. This is in keeping with the bill's intent to provide a basic and fundamental right of negotiating for those who protect us without endangering the lives of the people they are hired to protect.

It is well-known that labor-management relationships are based on trust, mutual respect, open communications, compromise and shared accountability. I believe this to be especially true as it relates to our public safety officers. We depend on them to maintain our safety and they depend on our respect and understanding if they are going to continue to provide us with the level of comfort in our communities to which we are accustomed. They deserve no less.

This bill has the support of the International Association of Fire Fighters; the International Brotherhood of Police Officers; the International Union of Police Associations; the National Association of Police Organizations and the Fraternal Order of Police. It also has the bi-partisan support of over 125 of our colleagues upon its introduction.

I urge our colleagues to join us in supporting the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act of 1999.

THE PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYER-
EMPLOYEE COOPERATION ACT
OF 1999

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to join my friend from Ohio, Mr. NEY, myself, and over 100 of their colleagues, to support the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act of 1999.

Congress has long recognized the importance of assuring and protecting the right of workers to collectively bargain. Over the years, federal laws have been extended to guarantee collective bargaining to different sectors and now the only sizable group of workers without the rights to collectively bargain are employees of state and local government.

This is particularly troubling as it applies to the public safety arena. Fire fighters and police officers take seriously their oath to protect the public and as a result they do not engage in worker slowdowns or stoppages. The absence of the right to collectively bargain denies them the opportunity to influence decisions that affect their lives.

The Public Safety Employer-Employee Act provides public safety officers with a collective bargaining right that is outside the scope of other federal labor laws. This legislation establishes basic minimum standards that state

laws must meet and provides a process to resolve impasses in states without such laws. States that already have collective bargaining laws would be exempt from the federal statute. Furthermore, this bill prohibits strikes and does not call for mandatory binding arbitration.

Public safety workers risk their lives every day to protect the public. At the very least, they should be allowed to bargain for wages, hours, and safe working conditions. This bill helps workers, management, and the general public, because employer-employee cooperation leads to cost savings and better delivery of services.

This bill is supported by the International Association of Fire Fighters, International Brotherhood of Police Officers, International Union of Police Organizations, National Association of Police Organizations, and the Fraternal Order of Police.

I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act of 1999.

EXPRESS YOUR CONCERN ABOUT CHINA

HON. JOHN E. SWEENEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. SWEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I would respectfully request all of my colleagues to join me in signing a letter requesting the President to use the upcoming visit with China's Premier Zhu Rongji to express our profound concern regarding several issues, including: Human rights violations in China and Tibet; China's ongoing public vilification against Japan; China's deployment of several hundred missiles against Taiwan; China's buildup of their nuclear strike capability; China's clandestine efforts to acquire secret United States military technologies; China's assistance to the development of the North Korea missile program; and China's sales of missile and nuclear technologies to terrorist states.

If you agree with me that the time has come for some truth and realism to be put back into our relations with the People's Republic of China please join in signing the letter I have submitted into the RECORD by contacting my office.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: We are taking this opportunity, in advance of Premier Zhu Rongji's visit, to express our profound concern about several issues involving the People's Republic of China.

Since 1994 the P.R.C. has been constructing military facilities in the Spratly Islands. The size and nature of these facilities suggest that the P.R.C. is attempting to establish a permanent strategic presence in the area, from which it could patrol the sea lanes in the South China Sea, the waterway through which one sixth of the world's trade is shipped.

The military buildup in the Spratly Islands has been accompanied by an ever more strident campaign of public vilification against Japan, a treaty ally of the United States and the base for 50,000 United States troops, the largest single concentration of United States military forces abroad. In another strategic concern, in March 1997 a Chinese controlled company was able to obtain, from Panama, the rights to the port facilities that flank the canal zone.

Then there is the matter of the democratic nation of Taiwan. The P.R.C.'s 1995 military exercises and 1996 missile firings in the Taiwan Strait have been followed by an offen-

sive military buildup on the Chinese mainland itself that includes tripling the number of missiles (to more than 100) already deployed against Taiwan. With several hundred more missiles expected for similar deployment, the recent Defense Department study on the military balance in the Taiwan Strait describes an "overwhelming advantage in offensive missiles which Beijing is projected to possess in 2005."

These developments are all the more alarming when seen against the backdrop of (1) China's overall military modernization, its abandonment of a traditional, land-based "people's army" in favor a comprehensive strategic and nuclear strike capability by land, sea, and air; (2) China's clandestine efforts to acquire the most secret and sensitive of United States military technologies, including the know-how to replicate the W 88 warhead, the most dangerous security breach in 50 years; and (3) allegations that China has assisted the North Korean missile program, on top of its known and suspected sales of missile and nuclear technologies to terrorist states.

Mr. President, with respect to China, our country has looked the other way for too long. And we have tolerated a ballooning trade deficit for too long. We request that you make it emphatically clear to Premier Zhu that the United States has legal and moral obligations to our allies that we will honor. And if that means, as we believe it does, a land or sea based missile defense in the Western Pacific—then so be it.

Mr. President, we would also request that you emphasize the P.R.C.'s worsening record regarding human rights violations in China and Tibet. Among these violations are the recent excessive jail and labor camp sentences for pro-democracy activists, Xu Wenli, Qin Yongmin, Wang Youcai, and Zhang Shuangang, the latter for allegedly "providing intelligence to hostile foreign organizations" while giving an interview on Radio Free Asia regarding farmer protests.

And as for Taiwan, now is the time to remind Beijing that the Taiwan Relations Act—the law of the United States—mandates the United States to "make available to Taiwan such defense articles in such quantity as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability. That is our law, period. And that same law mandates that the determination of what Taiwan needs will be made by "the President and the Congress."

Mr. President, the United States policy toward the P.R.C. has been based on wishful thinking for far too long. Policy makers in the Administration of both parties have time and time again been willing to give Chinese leaders the benefits of the doubt only to be consistently let down. The occasion of Premier Zhu's visit provides a timely opportunity to put some truth and realism back into this relationship. It will take the same kind of resolution you showed by sending aircraft carriers into the Taiwan Strait in 1996. We applauded you then, and we will support you now in taking the necessary steps to protect the United States interests and our allies in the region.

PERMANENTLY FIX THE ALTERNATIVE MINIMUM TAX

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 1999

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to permanently fix the tax problem caused by the fact that the new tax credits for education and children are limited by the alternative minimum

tax (AMT). Consequently, more and more average Americans who use the dependent care credit, the new child credit, the HOPE credit or the lifelong learning credit, will be forced to fill out the complex alternative minimum tax form. Even worse, a growing number of Americans will have all or part of these credits denied by the interaction of the regular federal income tax and the alternative minimum tax.

This is not a new issue. Last year I introduced legislation, H.R. 4489, to permanently fix this problem. Once it was clear that permanent legislation would not pass, I introduced H.R. 4611 to correct this problem for 1998. This one year temporary "fix" did pass Congress last fall as part of the Omnibus Appropriations Act. This year, the Administration's budget includes a two year "fix" of this problem. This is simply not enough. This is a permanent problem; it demands a permanent solution.

Specifically, my legislation allows personal nonrefundable credits to be used against AMT liability. Nonrefundable credits include the child credit, the HOPE and lifetime learning credits, the dependent care credit, and the adoption tax credit. In addition, the bill eliminates the complex interaction of the partially refundable family credit with the AMT. In doing so, the bill would eliminate a penalty faced by large families.

Under current law, the total allowable amount of nonrefundable personal credits may not exceed the amount by which the individual's regular income tax liability exceeds the individual's tentative minimum tax. For families with three or more children, an additional refundable child credit is provided and this is reduced by the amount of the individual's minimum tax liability. This requires all taxpayers who claim the child credit with incomes above \$45,000 for joint filers and \$33,750 for single filers to make at least a rudimentary minimum tax calculation.

The Department of the Treasury estimated that in 1998, without the one year "fix", eight hundred thousand taxpayers who are entitled to the child credit or the education credits would have been denied the full benefit of these credits by the AMT.

In order to eliminate the complexities of the AMT in a revenue neutral manner, this bill reduces the income phase-outs for the child credit from \$110,000 to \$91,000 on a joint return, and from \$7,500 to \$60,000 for single filers.

According to the IRS, the estimated average time it takes to fill out the alternative minimum tax form is 5 hours and 39 minutes. It would, of course, take much longer for hundreds of thousands of taxpayers who may be forced to fill this form out for the first time as a result of the credits Congress offered them last year in the name of child care and education.

And to show how truly perverse this provision is, the interaction between the AMT and the partially refundable child credit will result in a tax increase on 177,000 large families if the Republican 10 percent across the board tax cut was passed into law. Some might respond that they intend to fix this problem later, but that is exactly the type of thinking that put us in this situation to begin with.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is "must pass" legislation, and it must be passed on a bipartisan,